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Work Environment and Economic Variables as Correlates of Teachers' Productivity in Calabar, Nigeria

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Abstract:
This study investigated work environment and economic variables as correlates of teachers' productivity in Calabar, Nigeria. It considered physical and social work environment, increase in salaries/allowances and payment of allowances/bonuses and their relationship with teachers' productivity. The study was guided by four purposes which were converted to four hypotheses, tested at .05 level of significance. A questionnaire titled Work Environment and Economic Variables Questionnaire (WEEVQ) was used in data collection, from a sample of 200 teachers in public secondary schools in Calabar. The generated data was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The findings of the study indicated that the physical work environment and social work environment had significant relationship with teachers' productivity. The results also showed a significant relationship between increase in salaries/allowances and payment of allowances/bonuses and teachers' productivity. It was therefore recommended that professional counsellors should consider these factors while drawing up strategies for improved productivity in the school system and beyond.

Keywords: work environment, productivity, economic variables, teachers, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Education is acknowledged in Nigeria as an excellent instrument for national development. *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999* (as amended) stipulates that the security and welfare of Nigerians is the primary purpose of government. In an obvious acknowledgment of the pivotal role of education in achieving improved security/welfare and enhancing national development, the Constitution emphasizes the commitment of government to ensure equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels, eradicate illiteracy and provide free education at all levels (FRN, 1999). This commitment is borne out of the belief that the product of the sector would make meaningful contribution to national development.

Productivity is a crucial concept in education, just like in other human endeavours. It is seen as the ratio between the total educational output and the resources utilized in the process as well as the degree of efficiency and effectiveness of the output. Assessment of productivity in education is reflected in the quality of education, which is usually compared with the societal goals and expectations (Okunloye, 2005). Interestingly, productivity is influenced by a variety of factors. Some of the factors established by researchers include class size, work climate, motivation, economic variables, emotional intelligence, amongst others (Olayemi, 2012; Akintayo, 2012; Babatunde, James, Ifeanyi and Olanrewaju, 2014). This study considered some of the factors with a view to establishing their influence on teachers' productivity.

An earlier study by Akintayo (2012) to ascertain the influence of work environment and worker's morale on perceived productivity amongst industrial workers in Nigeria used 311 respondents from public and private organizations. The researcher used three sets of questionnaires tagged Working Environment Scale (WES), Workers' Morale Scale (WMS) and Workers' Productivity Scale (WPS); while Regression analysis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and t-test were used for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed significant relationship existing among working environment, workers' morale and perceived productivity. Specifically, the

researcher indicated that working environment is significantly related to workers` morale; and that working environment has significantly correlated with perceived workers` productivity. Furthermore, in a study to ascertain the relationship between school climate, student achievements' and teachers' productivity, Adeogun and Olisaemeka (2011) reported that there is a significant relationship between school climate, performance and productivity.

According to Akporehe (2011), work environment is the overall conditions under which a person works or performs his or her duties. The present study considers work environment in terms of physical and social work environment. Physical work environment is the quality of physical work setting including offices, classrooms, recreational facilities etc Social work environment can be described as the ambience of the work environment. This can be perceived through the degree of friendliness, interpersonal relationship, including management/staff, staff/staff, and staff/students relationship. According to Suzanne, Claudius and Patricia (2010), the social environment described as interpersonal relationship, labour-management relations, motivation, workers' training and development has high influence on the workers` morale and efficiency at workplace. This evidently implies high productivity.

Researchers have also investigated the place of motivation on productivity. Different motivational factors have been considered by researchers to establish their influence on productivity. Specifically, incentives like monetary incentive (salary), non monetary incentives like promotion, job security etc have been linked directly to staff productivity (Ozoemena, 2013). Experts are quick to point out that productivity would suffer where such factors that are directly linked with it are ignored. In their study, Ofojebe and Ezugoh (2010) also concluded that teachers' motivational variables like promotion, good salaries and remuneration, staff training etc have influence on teachers' efficiency, productivity and performance for quality outcomes. These reports and findings have strengthened the justification for the present study, which sought to establish the influence of work environment and economic variables on teachers' productivity in Calabar, Nigeria.

2. Research purposes

The study sought to find out if work environment and economic variable are correlates of teachers' productivity in Calabar, Nigeria. Specifically, the study aimed at identifying the influence of:
   i. Physical work environment on productivity of teachers.
   ii. Social work environment on productivity of teachers.
   iii. Increase in salaries and allowances on productivity of teachers.
   iv. Payment of allowances and bonuses on productivity of teachers.

3. Hypotheses

Four two-tailed tests of significance were formulated to guide this study. These non directional hypotheses were derived from the purposes, and were tested at alpha level of .05. They included the proposition that:
   • Ho 1.   There is no significant relationship between physical work environment and teachers' productivity.
   • Ho 2. There is no significant relationship between social work environment and teachers' productivity.
   • Ho 3. There is no significant relationship between increase in salaries/allowances and teachers' productivity.
   • Ho 4. There is no significant relationship between payment of allowances/bonuses and teachers' productivity.

4. Research Methodology

The study adopted correlation design; it sought to establish the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. It was situated in Calabar, the Capital City of Cross River State. Calabar has two local government areas viz Calabar Municipal and Calabar South. The population of the study included all teachers in all the public secondary schools in the two local government areas making up Calabar, the state capital. Simple random sampling was adopted in drawing 200 teachers used as the sample for the study.

A questionnaire titled Work Environment and Economic Variables Questionnaire (WEEVQ), designed by the researchers, was used in data gathering. The questionnaire had two sections. Section A of the questionnaire sought to gather demographic variables from the respondents; while section B was a 14-item section which focused on the main variables of the study. The section B had a 4 point likert-like scale which was scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The generated data was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

4.1. Presentation and Discussion of Results

➢ Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between physical work environment and teachers' productivity.

The first hypothesis sought to establish the influence or otherwise of physical work environment on teachers productivity. It is the assumption of the hypothesis that such relationship does not exist statistically. But in order to switch from assumption to certainty, the hypothesis was tested. The table 1 below presents the result of the study and the decision arrived at on this hypothesis.

Groups	N	r	r Critical	α	p	Decision	Inference
Physical Work Environment	200	0.62	0.138	.05	.000	Reject Ho	Correlation is significant
Productivity	200						

Table 1: The significance of the relationship between physical work environment and teachers' productivity

The above table shows the calculated r to be 0.62 while r critical is 0.138 at .05 level of significance. Since the calculated r value is greater the critical r, the null hypothesis is rejected; as the correlation has proven to be significant. Additionally, it is evident in the table that the probability is less than alpha; thus providing a further ground to reject the null hypothesis. It therefore implies that there is a significant relationship between physical work environment and teachers' productivity. This finding agrees with the finding of an earlier study conducted by Akintayo (2012). The researcher had conducted a study to ascertain the influence of work environment and worker's morale on perceived productivity amongst industrial workers in Nigeria, using 311 respondents from public and private organizations. The researcher reported that the finding of the study revealed significant relationship existing among working environment, workers` morale and perceived productivity.

➢ Hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between social work environment and teachers' productivity.
The second hypothesis is also on work environment, but specifically on social work environment. It sought to establish the existence or otherwise of relationship between the social work environment and teachers' productivity. The generated and analyzed data on this hypothesis are presented on the table below.

Groups	N	r	r Critical	α	p	Decision	Inference
Social Work Environment	200	0.48	0.138	.05	.000	Reject Ho	Correlation is significant
Productivity	200						

Table 2: The significance of the relationship between social work environment and teachers' productivity

From the table, the proposition that there is no significant relationship between social work environment and teachers' productivity is rejected; implying that there is a significant relationship between social work environment and teachers' productivity. The decision was arrived at as the probability is less than alpha, and the calculated r is greater than the critical r value. The finding that there is a statistically significant relationship between the social work environment and teachers' productivity agrees with the finding of an earlier study by Adeogun and Olisaemeka (2011). These researchers conducted a study to ascertain the relationship between school climate, student achievements' and teachers' productivity. They reported a significant relationship between school climate, performance and productivity.

➢ Hypothesis three: There is no significant relationship between increase in salaries/allowances and teachers' productivity.
Hypothesis 3 was an assumption that there is no relationship between increase in salaries/allowances and teachers' productivity. This hypothesis was tested, and the summary of the result is presented in table 3 below.

Groups	N	r	r Critical	α	p	Decision	Inference
Increment in salaries/allowances	200	0.58	0.138	.05	.000	Reject Ho	Correlation is significant
Productivity	200						

Table 3: The significance of the relationship between increase in salaries/allowances and teachers' productivity

From the table 3 above, the calculated r at .05 level of significance is 0.58; while the critical value of r is 0.138. It is obvious that the calculated r is greater than the critical r value. This is the basis for the rejection of the null hypothesis as indicated in the summary table above. Furthermore, the probability is less than alpha, thus justifying the rejection of the null hypothesis. The rejection of the null hypothesis means that there is actually a significant relationship between increase in salaries/allowances and teachers' productivity. This finding concurs with earlier position of experts on the subject matter. For instance, Ofojebe and Ezugoh (2010) concluded from their study that teachers' motivational variables like promotion, good salaries and remuneration have influence on teachers' efficiency, productivity and performance for quality outcomes.

➢ Hypothesis four: There is no significant relationship between payment of allowances/bonuses and teachers' productivity.
The fourth hypothesis for the study was interested in the existence or otherwise of a relationship between payment of allowances/bonus and teachers' productivity. The table 4 below presents the summary of the data generated and tested, and the decision and inference of the decision taken on this hypothesis.

Groups	N	r	r Critical	α	p	Decision	Inference
Payment of salaries/bonuses	200	0.68	0.138	.05	.000	Reject Ho	Correlation is significant
Productivity	200						

Table 4: The significance of the relationship between payment of salaries/bonuses and teachers' productivity

Table 4 provides for the rejection of the null hypothesis because the relationship existing is significant. This decision arose from the fact that the probability (.000) is less than alpha (.05); and the calculated r (0.68) is greater than the critical r value (0.138). It therefore upholds the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between payment of allowances/bonuses and teachers'

productivity. This finding also agrees with position earlier reported by researchers. According to Ozoemena (2013), incentives like monetary incentive (salary), non monetary incentives like promotion, job security etc have direct link with staff productivity. The inference from this hypothesis also agrees with the findings of Ofojebe and Ezugoh (2010) that teachers' motivational variables like promotion, good salaries and remuneration have influence on teachers' efficiency, productivity and performance for quality outcomes.

5. Implications and Conclusion

This study has far reaching implications to stakeholders in a productive process, including administrators, managers, Human Resources personnel, employers of labour and counsellors. The findings of the study have proven that factors like physical work environment, social work environment, increase in salaries/allowances and payment of allowances/bonuses are major determinant of the outcome of the productive process. The stakeholders would therefore have to consider these variables while planning for the attainment of the goals of their organizations.

However, our particular concern is on the implication of the outcome of this study to the counsellors. The counsellors have an unenviable task of facilitating optimum productivity in any environment. This ranges from working place to corrective institutions, and to nurturing institution like schools and hospitals. The outcome of this study therefore would guide the counsellors while considering strategies to facilitate the attainment of their goals in any establishment. The findings emphasize the point that variables like physical work environment, social work environment, increase in salaries/allowances and payment of allowances/bonuses are factors that should not be ignored if the counsellor is planning for an improved productivity in any establishment, especially in schools.

This study considered work environment and economic variables as correlates of teachers' productivity in Calabar, Cross River State capital. Variables considered included physical environment, social environment, increase in salaries/allowances and payment of salaries/bonuses. These variables were correlated with teachers's productivity. The findings of the study indicated that each of these variables has significant relationship with teachers' productivity. It is therefore logical to conclude that these variables should be considered while planning for the realization of the goals and objectives of education.

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